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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 002665

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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION REPORT - Iraq - Jaafari Guantanamo
Hamas
PARIS - Friday, April 21, 2006

(A) SUBJECTS COVERED IN TODAY'S REPORT:

Iraq - Jaafari
Guantanamo
Hamas

B) SUMMARY OF COVERAGE:

Chirac's position on helping the Palestinians expressed while in Egypt, the Pentagon's release of the list of Guantanamo detainee names, the Moussaoui trial and Jaafari's intention to bow out are today's major international stories. (See Part C)

All media note today's date, April 21: one year ago today President Chirac got 19.88% of the votes, while the National Front garnered 16.86%. Reports and polls show that today, the extreme right remains "attractive" for the French. La Croix titles "The Shadow of April 21 Hovers over 2007." And inside an expert indicates that "a repeat of 2002 is perfectly possible." Liberation headlines: "Le Pen, Older, Tired, But Still Lying in Ambush" and reports on a poll published today by Ifop and the free paper Metro, which indicates that 35% of respondents consider that "the extreme right enriches France's political debate," while 34% say "the extreme right remains close their preoccupations."

Le Monde devotes a full page to the difficulties musicians are facing in order to obtain a visa to travel to the U.S. "especially if they come from Muslim countries." The article is entitled "America Is Also Wary of Music." A separate article is entitled "For French Tourism Professionals, the Season Is Ruined." Francois Bostnavaron explains the procedure and the cost to get a tourism visa in France and quotes a tourism official: "For people from the provinces, it is already too late for this season." Says another: "Fortunately for us, some have turned to Canada." The article notes that two tour operators have offered to take on the cost of the new French electronic passport.

Le Monde devotes a two-page report to the Latino immigrants' situation in the U.S., a population "which is sure of its strength:" "Today we march, tomorrow we vote." The article comments: "Americans are discovering the new 'Latin Power.'" Le Figaro's report on the Moussaoui trial explains how his own defense team "is discrediting" its client, thanks to information provided by Richard Reid, 'the shoe bomber', in order to save him from the death penalty, for reasons of mental imbalance.

Le Figaro reports on a controversy over the hiring of Islamists at Roissy-Charles de Gaulle airport. A controversy that pits Interior Minister Sarkozy against right-leaning Philippe de Villiers, who is about to publish a pamphlet describing the airport as "a nest of Islamists" based on information he has gathered from confidential memos. Le Figaro's report indicates that Interior Minister Sarkozy is proposing solutions "in order to counter the effects" of the de Villiers pamphlet, "even before it is published." The question of the airport's hiring temporary personnel appears to be a major issue. Le Figaro also tells the story of a pilot who claims that "immediately after 9/11, a number of employees who openly said they were Islamists, disregarded security regulations at Roissy 2."

(C) SUPPORTING TEXT/BLOCK QUOTES:

Iraq - Jaafari

"Iraqi Prime Minister Throws in the Towel"
Tanguy Berthemet in right-of-center Le Figaro (04/21): "The crisis shaking Iraq for the past four months may be close to a denouement. By admitting that he is ready to bow out, Jaafari is giving a chance to a quick formation of a government. Jaafari's gesture comes on the heels of increased pressure from President Bush and the UN to find a solution to

Iraq's political crisis. The probable election of another Shiite candidate to the post of Prime Minister may lift the deadlock. But other nominations to key posts will not be simplified and remain the subject of intense negotiations among the various confessional groups in Iraq. Sistani himself has indicated that forming a government would be a quick way to jugulate the escalating violence."

Guantanamo

"Pentagon Reveals Guantanamo Names"

Philippe Gelie in right-of-center Le Figaro (04/21): "For the first time in four years, the Pentagon is lowering its guard in its 'secret war' against terrorism. forced by the Justice system to be more transparent. Until now the detainees' identities had been held secret in the name of contradictory arguments, going from national security to the protection of the detainees themselves. The U.S. Army has confirmed that all the light has been shed on the detainees and that the list 'is complete.' Nevertheless, some things remain unclear. In particular, there is no way of knowing which individuals are still being held in one of the five Camp Delta enclosures. Three French citizens are listed, although they have been sent back to France."

Hamas

"Europe Wants to Help the Palestinians, Not Hamas"

Pierre Prier in right-of-center Le Figaro (04/21): "President Chirac is convinced that human societies are not apt to naturally live in harmony: 'this huge melting pot is something most people have not been prepared for, either through history or education.' This pessimistic analysis indirectly condemns the American will to bring democracy to the region, but which the U.S. is advertising less and less. The case of Palestine, with the election of Hamas poses a very concrete and serious problem for the French President: how not to punish the Palestinians for having voted in favor of a movement considered to be a 'terrorist' movement by the EU and which has refused to condemn the latest suicide bombing in Tel Aviv."

"In Cairo, Chirac Pleads in Favor of the Palestinians"

Natalie Nougayrede in left-of-center Le Monde (04/21): "President Chirac warned against the negative effects of cutting financial aid to the Palestinians. 'It would be unfair and politically tactless to make the Palestinian population pay.' France is counting on Egypt's influence and that of other Arab countries to incite Hamas to amend its position on Israel. On the Egyptian side it is hoped that France will weigh in on the Europeans so that Palestinian institutions are not asphyxiated."

STAPLETON